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ABSTRACT

This paper is a case study of a recently reconceptualized teacher education program which has a critical inquiry base and an emphasis on "language across the curriculum." The paper describes the program's rationale, organization and practice along with a description of the ongoing process of program development. The goal of the Rockhurst College Teacher Education Program (Kansas City, Missouri) is to prepare teachers who will be able to engage in critical inquiry through reflective action. It is hoped that Rockhurst graduates will teach with an awareness of alternatives for teaching practices and an awareness of the origins and consequences of these alternatives. Moreover, they are being prepared with the skills necessary to select, organize and implement curriculum based on a considered and communicated rationale. This view of teaching involves making problematic students' taken-for-granted assumptions about schools, teaching, and learning as they develop the ability to analyze the schooling process. At the core of the program is the notion that teaching is dialogical and that language facility provides the means to achieve reflective action. (Author)

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# Critical Inquiry in Teacher Preparation

by

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Critical Inquiry in Teacher Preparation

> . . . the idea of questioning authority, questioning reality--I know it needs to be--we have to be responsible persons. . . This is going to require me to think . . . I am aware now of how sometimes I get out of the responsibility of thinking, of acting or reacting, but rather, choose to be imprinted. I wonder why?
>
> from Leah's Journal (an Elementary Education Major)

This paper is a case study of a recently re-conceptualized teacher education program which has a critical inquiry base and a language across the curriculum emphasis. The paper describes the program's rationale, re-organization and on-going process of program development.

The goal of the Rockhurst College Teacher Education Program, which is still in its initial stages, is to prepare prospective teachers who are able to engage in critical inquiry through reflective action (Berlak and Berlak, 1981, Giroux, 1981). That is, they are able to teach with an awareness of alternatives for teaching practice and the origins and consequences of these alternatives. Moreover, they are able to apply the skills necessary to select, organize and implement curriculum based on a considered and communicated rationale.

This view of teaching unifies the practical with the theoretical. It entails making problematic students' taken-for-granted assumptions about schools, teaching and learning as they develop the ability to analyze the schooling process. At the core of the program is the notion that teaching is dialogical (Barnes, 1975); that language facility pro-

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## Rationale

### Critiques of Teacher Education

The problem of how to best prepare teachers has long stimulated debate (see, for example, Borrowman, 1956) and today, no less than in the past, teacher education is under fire. There are even those who maintain that a formal program of teacher preparation is unnecessary. Most criticism, however, is directed at critiquing and reforming existing programs and it is this literature which will be briefly reviewed before turning to a description of one college's effort at program reform.

Many of the critics of teacher education argue that existing programs do not adequately prepare students for "the realities" of classroom teaching. Courses are described as too easy and too accessible, thus discouraging bright potential teachers (Clark, 1984). Teachers themselves often complain that education courses are not relevant to the "real world" of teaching (Lortie, 1975); some argue that these courses focus too much on "theory" and not enough on "how to" teach:

> They have not been taught how to organize a course, how to plan a lesson, how to manage a class, how to give an explanation, how to arouse interest and motivation, how to ask various kinds of questions ... in short, how to teach.
>
> (Gage, 1984, p. 92)

Simply put, this argument contends that not enough attention is paid to the immediate and pressing needs of students learning to teach.

A variety of studies have found that student teachers are overwhelmingly concerned with such immediate and pressing needs. For many, managing the class and covering the material take top priority (e.g., Gibson, 1976;



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Tabachnick, et. al., 1978). Since survival is a key concern, some critics argue that the major task of teacher educators ought to be to equip prospective teachers with the routines and skills necessary to survive in the classroom (Fuller, 1969).

Related to this criticism is the argument that no matter what happens on campus, nothing will compensate for the overwhelming influence of the student teaching site (Iannaccone, 1963; Doyle, 1977). More specifically, argue some, the role of the cooperating teacher in preparing students to teach is highly significant (e.g., Hoy, 1969; Hoy & Rees, 1977). These studies point to a shift in the attitude of student teachers from "service" to "survival". Once at their student teaching site, the concerns of these students focus on management, covering the material and making a good impression. The implication here is that the on-site experience is in contradiction to the college or university preparation, and is more significant for the student teacher.

The view that practical experience contradicts the liberalizing college or university experience is, however, questionable (Zeichner, et. al., 1980). It may be a mistake to assume that the university is a "liberalizing" influence. Indeed, this brings us to another form of criticism leveled at teacher preparation programs. This criticism argues that the problem with existing programs is not that they don't prepare students for the world of classroom teaching well enough, but rather that they prepare students too well.

Proponents of this point of view argue that most university courses are not liberalizing forces (Zeichner, et. al., 1980). Rather, course work, like the on-site experience, serves to help teachers fit into and accept "things as they are" (Joyce, et. al., 1977; Tabachnick, 1980; Giroux, 1980). Gideonse (1982), for example, notes a decline in attention and commitment



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to the liberal arts and argues that this, in turn, affects the intellectual and moral dimensions of teaching. Students, he argues, are not familiar with the cultural contexts of their teaching, nor with domains of inquiry which might give teachers the skills to think about their teaching. These, he argues, are as necessary to good teaching, as the professional knowledge developed from research on teaching.

This criticism of teacher preparation is much like that presented by John Dewey in 1904. Dewey argued that normal schools prepared teachers who, upon beginning to teach, were proficient in the tools of their trade, but who never developed the skills for intelligent reflection about their work. "It is possible for students to acquire outward form of method," wrote Dewey, "without capacity to put it to genuinely educative use" (Dewey, 1964, p. 318). Nearly eighty years later, Giroux (1981) makes a similar criticism. Teacher education, he argues, is too often approached with a "technocratic rationality" which emphasizes the performance of particular skills, but discourages questioning the categories and definitions to which these skills are applied or the needs of those in the particular context.

> Teacher education programs have simply not given teachers the conceptual tools they need in order to view knowledge as problematic, as an historically conditioned, socially constructed phenomenon.
>
> (Giroux, 1981, p. 55)

In short, these critics argue that teacher preparation programs do, indeed, focus on "how to" teach; but they do not encourage students to ask why or to what end. These programs do little to facilitate what Eisner (1979) calls "eduational connoisseurship" or the ability to recognize and appreciate "what is educationally significant" (Eisner, 1979,

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p. x). They do little to help students make thoughtful judgments in particular situations.

These varying criticisms of teacher education programs suggest varying solutions. If one argues that students are not being adaquately equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to survive in the classroom, then one can point to a growing body of knowledge on effective teaching and argue that this research must be more systematically and thoroughly incorporated into teacher education programs.

Those who argue that there is too great an emphasis on how to teach and not enough on raising questions about what, when or why do not argue that a concern for the practical should be ignored. Rather, they argue that because the practical and theoretical are intermeshed, an "inquiry based framework" (Zeichner, 1983) for teacher education requires that students learn to examine the moral, ethical and political aspects of teaching practice. It is from this "inquiry" perspective that the Rockhurst College Teacher Education Program has been organized. However, the term "inquiry" may mean many things. Therefore, a discussion of critical inquiry, as it guides this program, follows.

Teaching as Critical Inquiry

The development and implementation of Rockhurst's Teacher Education Program grows out of a critical theory base (Habermas, 1971; Giddens, 1976; Giroux, 1981, 1983). From this perspective, teaching can be critical inquiry when it takes into account the origins and consequences of present actions and carries out alternatives for future action. Language facility is central to the development of teaching as critical inquiry. Through dialogue, connections can be made between what we know, what we are learning and what we do. In this section we give a brief view of



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the rationality of critical theory followed by a description of its influence on the program and the role of language in developing teaching as critical inquiry.

The Rationality of Critical Theory. Here, the term "rationality" refers to a particular world view, that is, a way of conceiving of and operating within society. Giroux (1981) describes rationality as:

> . . . a set of interests that defines and qualifies how one reflects on the world. All modes of rationality contain a 'problematic' [which] renders questionable the explicit and implicit messages in a theoretical structure; it also reveals the ideological source that lies beneath the choice of what is considered important or unimportant in a mode of thinking. (p. 8,9)

A rationality, then, encompasses a particular view of knowledge, of a way of knowing and acting. Among the characteristics of the rationality of critical theory is its view of the relationship of theory to practice. Critical theory acknowledges a direct bond between theory and practice, sees knowledge as directly connected to practical needs, and aims toward an emancipatory, critical human agency in which our own and others' concerns can be explored and acted upon. Critical theory views knowledge as socially constructed. Because it is a product of human interests, that which comes to be seen as valid knowledge is determined by the dominant class (Habermas, 1971) which establishes institutions and social practices that tend to neglect the interests of others.

This perspective also sees persons as both creators and products of their social worlds; as both subjects and objects who are at once perpetuating the status quo as well as contributing to its change. Although the dominant culture actually defines what is taken for reality by society

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through the establishment of ideologies that secure its interests and reinforce the sense that the "way things are" is not "open for change", a critical rationality does not see non-dominant cultures as passive recipients without recourse. Rather, they can resist, and this resistance can work toward contradicting that dominance. Becoming conscious of their personal and collective histories, reflecting upon their present situation and upon alternatives for the future, a non-dominant culture can act in its own behalf. Through "minded", collaborative action, persons can create alternatives that hold emancipatory potential.

A Critical Rationality and Schools. A critical rationality acknowleges that schooling is not interest free. Like other social institutions, schools are tied to dominant political forces. However, schools are also sites of resistance which can act as counterforces to those who control the allocation of resources and power. From this perspective, schools function as agents for the culture in order to both maintain continuity and allow for change; to provide the young with knowledge and skills to reinforce as well as challenge. It is not uncommon to see schools as dispensers of knowledge--knowledge that is to be taken as given in a "teacher proof" curriculum and received by passive, unquestioning students. A critical perspective, however, sees knowledge as problematical, that is, open to challenge. The curriculum, the "public knowledge" presented in schools is seen as value laden and therefore requires careful selection and presentation in order to meet the needs of more than those who are in control. Schooling from a critical perspective takes into account the "personal knowledge" of learners and teachers, that is, their lived experience, their recent and past histories. It adds "personal knowledge" to "public knowledge" in the formation of

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curriculum which takes into account the origins and consequences of school knowledge and considers alternatives for its presentation. This requires the development of a critical pedagogy.

A Critical Rationality and Teaching

Teaching, as a form of critical inquiry entails engaging in reflective action--action based on an awareness of alternatives, their current and historical relevance, their past and potential consequences. It involves seeing the connections between daily teaching activity and the broader society. Teaching with a critical rationality requires a "craft" knowledge, that is "knowledge needed by teachers to alter their schooling patterns" (Berlak & Berlak, 1981, p. 237). This would mean knowledge of alternative approaches to learning, to curriculum development and to implementation. Further, it requires the ability to match these alternatives to needs of the immediate and continually changing classroom situation. A critical perspective leads teachers to base future teaching activity on an analysis of their own and others' present teaching patterns. It entails comparing these patterns and their consequences to the original intentions of teaching activities.

While teachers at all levels play an important role in legitimizing the social practices of the dominant society, their work, when cast in the rationality of critical theory, can play an equally important role in challenging social practices by allowing for the questioning of these practices and the consideration of alternatives.

Critical Rationality and Teacher Education.

Teacher education needs to go beyond the technical, commonsense, "training" that so often characterizes teacher preparation programs



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> The language, material organization, and social interactions of teacher education establish principles of authority, power and rationality for guiding occupational conduct. These patterns of thought and work are not neutral and cannot be taken for granted.
>
> (Popkowitz, 1979; p. 3)

A critical perspective for teacher education locates schools and schooling as part of a wider societal process to be looked at critically. It fosters "an understanding that both knowledge and people are 'processed' in schools" (Giroux, 1981, p. 157, emphasis in text).

Rather than making an attempt to provide prospective teachers the "one best way" or "recipe" for effective teaching, the critical perspective fosters a questioning attitude that leads to a critical understanding of their role as classroom teachers and the role of schools in the society. It strives to develop a critical understanding of the processes of learning and the nature of knowledge as curriculum; to assure analytic and reflective skills that prepare pre-service teachers to be active in shaping school practices.

> We simply suggest that he [the teacher] struggle against unthinking submergence in the social reality that prevails. If he wishes to present himself as a person actively engaged in critical thinking and authentic choosing, he cannot accept any "ready-made standardized scheme" at face value.
>
> (Greene, 1973; p. 269)

Stimulating a process in which students question their own common sense assumptions about schooling forms a starting place for a critical rationality in teacher education. By acknowledging their wide personal experience and knowledge of schools, prospective teachers can be given the opportunity to share these experiences and meanings; they can learn to stand back and question their "taken for granted" views of schooling. The conceptual and

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theoretical background needed to analyze and understand these experiences can be developed as questions are raised. The program would aim toward a developing sense of how the "way things are" has been shaped by people and can be transformed by people.

Teacher educators, in raising the issue of what constitutes school knowledge, move their students closer to an understanding of the social construction of knowledge, the influence of political forces in forming "accepted" school knowledge, and the teacher's potential influence as developer and implementor of curriculum.

Teacher education based on a critical rationality holds great potential. Prospective teachers with this background could enter the field of teaching with analytic skills that would enable them to select alternatives for teaching practice that best meet their pupil's needs. They would be able to give a clear rationale for their decisions. Acknowledging the impact of the origins and consequences of their teaching acts and the contradictions between goals and practices that follow, they would embark upon a career of continual challenge as they develop their craft--a career as critical inquirers.

Language, Teacher Preparation and a Critical Rationality. The role of language in the schooling process is a crucial one, not only because it comprises the vehicle for and often the content of what is learned, but because it provides the link between teacher and student. The concept of teaching as dialogue (Barnes, 1975; Freire, 1970, 1973, 1978) offers a powerful mode through which "personal" knowledge can be tapped and related to the "public" knowledge of school curriculum. Dialogue assures active student participation. It provides opportunities to identify and explore dominant interests as seen in schools and to reveal their ideologies,

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their implicit and explicit messages.

Tying personal knowledge to school knowledge can yield a powerful way to clarify the bond between practice and theory. The need for language skills is everywhere in teacher preparation, for example, in developing the skills of curriculum building, in the analysis of instruction and in evaluation. Prospective teachers need to be able to communicate a clearly stated and reasoned rationale for their actions--their decisions regarding classroom control, curriculum and its implementation. Developing strength in all forms of language facilitates the ability of prospective teachers to understand and utilize newly acquired analytic skills. This communicative process is basic to a critical rationality.

A language emphasis in teacher education serves to clarify the concept of knowledge as problematical, that is, that knowledge can change, take on many forms, and is challengeable. In course work, for example, the requirement of a work of literature, in addition to or in place of a text, raises the question of the nearly total reliance in schools upon expository forms of knowledge. It also models alternatives in curriculum development as it stimulates reflection upon taken for granted forms of "public" knowledge in schools.

The goal, then, of the Rockhurst College Teacher Education Program is to prepare teachers in basic teaching skills who will become critical inquirers. The challenge is to encourage prospective teachers to question their taken for granted assumptions, to see schooling in a broad socio-historical perspective, and to consider alternatives and their consequences. We now turn a case study of a teacher education program in the process of establishing a critical pedagogical base.

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## The Program

An understanding of the development and evaluation of a teacher preparation program is enhanced by setting the program in its social and historical context. Such concerns as the nature of the institution, the student body, faculty, past history, and current relationships can have a great influence on the direction and success of programs. Thus, an overview of the context of the Rockhurst College Teacher Education Program follows.

### Background of the Program

Rockhurst College is a Jesuit liberal arts institution located in Kansas City, MO. The College enrolls about 1500 full-time undergraduate students. Not suprisingly, most Rockhurst students are Catholic and many have attended only parochial schools before coming to Rockhurst. Hence, although many Rockhurst students come from large, urban areas--including Kansas City, St. Louis and Omaha--most have been sheltered from the urban schooling experiences of these cities, notably the problems and issues surrounding desegration.

The current Rockhust Teacher Education Program is a small one. There are three faculty members teaching full-time in the Education Department. At the end of this, the redeveloping program's second year, twenty-two students in elementary and secondary education will have graduated and projections suggest a graduating class of fifteen to twenty each year over the next four years. The evolution of this program is a unique one. Prior to 1977, the Education Department was small, with two full-time faculty, and, we are told, was not well respected on campus. The Department underwent major changes in 1977 when the Cooperative Urban Teacher Education (C.U.T.E.) program was located on the Rockhurst campus. This program brought in students from a consortium of Mid-western colleges and universities for a professional

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semester of course work and student teaching in Kansas City (Abbott, 1983). It was designed to prepare students for urban teaching by providing a multi-ethnic, urban living and teaching experience. The two, and later three, full-time people who taught in the C.U.T.E. program integrated the small Rockhurst Education Department into the larger C.U.T.E. program and C.U.T.E. provided the guiding philosophy for the entire department. Toward the end of its stay on the Rockhurst campus, two new faculty members were brought in and only one of the original C.U.T.E. staff remained. At the end of the 1982-83 academic year, the director of that program left the Rockhurst campus, taking the C.U.T.E. program with him.

The two remaining faculty approached the Dean with the prospect of re-thinking and restructuring the program. This led to a series of meetings in which the bases for the new program were developed. The opportunity was marked by both constraining and facilitating factors and these factors along with the intentions of the program developers and the program setting itself, have affected the course of program development.

Factors which contributed positively to the restructuring of the program included a compatibility of interests and philosophy of the two remaining faculty, a supportive dean, the "Jesuit tradition" which stresses the importance of teaching and reaching into the community, an opportunity to hire a compatible third colleague and the small size of the department itself. This small size meant the increased possibility of creating and actually putting into practice a coherent, consistent program.

A number of factors presented problems. The C.U.T.E. program had left behind a history of poor relationships between the Education Department and the rest of campus. The traditional scorn many professors have for those in

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Education had been exacerbated by poor personal relationships. Furthermore, although the administration, especially the Dean of Arts and Sciences, was anxious to support a renewed program, it was clear that financial support would have to be justified by increased numbers of students. In addition, there was our own administrative inexperience and the need to actually "run" a department. Finally, the third person hired proved to be incompatible with the thinking and direction which had begun to evolve.

Given these factors, the summer of 1983 brought the challenging opportunity to "start fresh". Despite obstacles, the opportunity to think critically about the existing program and about the possibilities for change was an exciting one and offered the faculty the unique experience of putting their ideas into practice in a total program.

Description of the Program

The Rockhurst Teacher Education Program seeks to provide prospective teachers a background in an experience with critical inquiry as a basis for their teaching practice.

The program offers state approved teacher certification in elementary, middle school and secondary education. Throughout the twenty courses over which the Education Department has control there is an increasing emphasis on critical inquiry culminating in the professional semester, a seventeen hour block of courses including student teaching. In order to facilitate the establishment of critical inquiry as a practical and empowering way to teach, two themes have guided program development: the co-joining of theory and practice and language across the curriculum.

Language Across the Curriculum. By "language across the curriculum" we refer to the centrality of language for learning in all its expressive

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and receptive forms, and particularly as critical literacy. We see "critical literacy" as the ability to think critically in order to take some practical action concerning what is read, heard, observed; to write and speak critically toward some practical purpose (Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1981; Roth, 1984). It is obvious that proficiency in language use is crucial to successful teaching since language permeates the teaching/learning process at all levels and disciplines and serves as a foundation for further learning (Barnes, 1975; Bullock, et. al, 1975; Smith, 1975; Rosen, 1973; Goodman, 1968). Therefore, we expect prospective teachers to be capable themselves in language use if they are to successfully convey these skills to school children.

This language across the curriculum theme builds upon the College's tradition of a strong liberal core requirement for all its graduates. For example, the core requires 12 credit hours in philosophy. This provides education majors a foundation derived from their other course work which reinforces the ability to speak, write and read critically and responsively. The Liberal Core includes requirements in social sciences, humanities, theology, foreign language and the sciences.

Through a language emphasis we seek to foster and develop meaningful interdisciplinary connections and explore their implications for education. For example, works of literature such as White's The Once an Future King, Walker's The Color Purple, and Joyce's A Portrait of An Artist as a Young Man are used in different courses to facilitate exploration of various forms of language, as well as the social and educational implications drawn from these works. We hope that our students enter the field of teaching prepared to translate this strong liberal arts background into liberating experiences in their own classrooms, thus perpetuating a



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continuing interest and participation in liberal studies for themselves as well as their pupils.

Theory/Practice Bond. The second theme that governs the reconceptualization of the department is the interrelation of theory and practice. As described earlier, because education is a field that requires the application of skills and knowledge in practical setting, it is commonly seen as separate from theoretical considerations. This view has ramifications for the nature and quality of teaching practice which we feel limit the potential for classroom learning. In all phases of the program, then, the bond between the theoretical and practical is stressed. For example, the Dilemmas of Schooling (Berlak & Berlak, 1981)serves as a major text. This work strives "to provide a language for examining the macro in the micro, the larger issues that are embedded in the particulars of the everyday schooling experiences." (p. 3,4) The dilemma language is first presented in the introductory foundations course; it is the primary text in the clinical experiences course where its use in observational analysis is stressed; courses in methods utilize the language; and in the final, professional semester, once again, it is a required text, now with an emphasis upon teaching as critical inquiry. Another example of a text which serves to bring together theory and practice is The Mismeasure of Man in which Gould presents an historical review of research on intelligence that clarifies the impact of research on schooling practice.

Alternative modes and approaches with their theoretical positions are given critical examination. This requires the ability to look critically at schooling issues and to present a rationale for choosing

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to carry out a particular approach. A high priority is given to developing the skill of analysis of instruction through observation of teaching practice in local schools, each other's teaching and, ultimately, each student's own teaching.

While these themes touch all course work, the following four broad categories represent areas of focus: 1) School and Society, 2) Knowledge as Problematical, 3) Learning and 4) the Craft of Teaching.

School and Society. Because schools, as agents for the culture, not only serve to assure continuity, but to provide the opportunity for change, we attempt to bring education students an understanding of the role schooling plays in the culture and their part as teachers in fulfilling that role. We feel this is particularly needed at Rockhurst College where the student body is largely white, middle class and Catholic. Our students need to expand their awareness of the growing need for teachers who are able to address the education of a multi-cultural society and to build toward world-wide cultural understanding. Building upon the concept of "culture", we are working to address opportunities for inter-cultural education, that is, considerations that cut across lines of class, race or country of origin, for example, youth culture, the handicapped, women, the elderly.

Readings, guest speakers and field trips are some of the strategies we've used to raise cultural concerns. For example, a guest speaker, a former teacher from the Soviet Union, and our colleague in the department who is from the Philippines, have both helped to heightened our students' awareness of the social and historical factors which influence forms of schooling.

Knowledge As Problematical. The concept that knowledge is problematical (rather than permanently established and unchallengeable) is a crucial one

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for educators, particularly in the area of curriculum development and its presentation. In keeping with an emphasis on critical thinking, we stress the notion that knowledge changes; that it takes various forms. This becomes an important consideration in the selection and presentation of content, not only in our expectations for how our students construct units of instruction, but also in the program's curriculum. For example, each course in the program includes a work of literature as well as a text. This reinforces the language theme and models for our students that knowledge in schools need not always take an expository form (see Appendix A).

Learning. Learning, the learner and evaluation of learning comprise another area of focus in which theory and practice are considered holistically. Placing learning theory in relation to contextual issues, that is, the learning situation, the learning stages represented, the background experiences of the learner, the evaluation vehicles and their use are, over the course of the program, given careful consideration.

The Craft of Teaching. The heart of any teacher preparation program is the craft of teaching or pedagogy. Our goal is to provide our students the background and skills that will enable them to work toward a critical pedagogy. While they develop the ability to select and implement curriculum through practical experience, it is our hope that our students utilize their developing knowledge of theoretical rationales for alternative approaches in curriculum development and delivery through critical reflection about their own and other's teaching practice.

Because the pedagogy of the faculty serves as a model to our students, we have made an effort to incorporate alternative lesson forms in our own teaching practice. We give particular emphasis to vehicles that tap students'

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personal knowledge and encourage an active exchange such as small discussion groups and collaborative projects.

We have used several strategies to get at these concepts and seem to be particularly effective. Despite some early resistance to small group work and collaborative projects, most students learn to participate actively in sharing ideas and shaping the direction of tasks. Student interviews with minority spokespersons in the community have helped to heighten awareness of varying perspectives. Reading works of fiction and biography has allowed students to experience various forms of knowledge and to explore the insights such works suggest.

In the process of implementing the ideas discussed above, we find, not surprisingly, that we encounter both rewarding experiences and troubling ones. In the next section we will discuss both kinds of experiences, first from the point of view of our own efforts to be critical inquirers and then from the point of view of our students' development.

## Problems and Promise

### Staff

One of the greatest problems we've faced in the development and implementation of program is not unlike the problem we faced as pre-college teachers: how do we find the time to reflect critically on what we do? Each of us has the typical workload that comes with teaching at a small college: a twelve hour teaching load, administrative duties, college committee work, a heavy advising schedule. In addition, we work with area schools, are active in professional organizations, and work at informing the rest of the campus about our program and about the relationship



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of teacher education to the total college.

We view this last task as equally important with others in the creation of an effective program. All college departments, after all, play a role in the preparation of teachers by providing education students with a liberal arts and subject matter specialty background. Furthermore, as teachers in higher education, all professors on campus benefit from contributing to the overall improvement of pre-college teaching. Rather than being seen as a small, less important department, we are working toward being recognized as a department which connects in constructive ways to the others. To further this end, we've made a point of attending college functions and generally being visible on campus. In addition, we attend and participate in faculty brown bag presentations, a forum for sharing faculty research. These sessions have proved to be an effective opportunity to educate and interest others in teacher education generally and in our program particularly.

We are pleased to see the progress in establishing a respected department on campus. People in other departments have been more than willing to discuss both substantive and procedural issues; for example, what course would best meet a particular state certification requirement. In some departments, most notably Mathematics and Science, professors report that they help their students make connections between what they learn in courses and what they need to know to teach these disciplines effectively. Courses have been developed in various departments which are geared specifically to teachers and teacher education students. Advisors (at Rockhurst all professors serve in this capacity) advise interested students to take at least one course in education.

And so, interdepartmental connections are being established, and the number of students who enroll in education classes and declare an education major has begun to increase. Our involvement in area, state and national



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professional activities has educated us politically as well as kept us in touch with work in the field.

But critical reflection often must be put aside in favor of more immediate demands. In an effort to address this continual problem, we have built into our work, mechanisms to encourage reflection. For example, we each keep a journal; we encourage observing one another's classes and sharing feedback; we have established a time during weekly staff meetings specifically designed to critique our work and discuss possible alternatives. Time pressures were also eased somewhat when the two authors of this paper received funding, through a College Presidential Grant, to work on and research curriculum development in the summer of 1984. During that summer, as well, a compatible third full-time faculty department member was hired. However, the best of intentions to reflect critically on our own work is often frustrated by the press of immediate and daily needs.

Students

Perhaps the best way to depict the problems and promise that we see in our students is to present a series of quotations and vignettes taken from class sessions, conversations, observations, student journals and projects. The students have given us permission to quote them, and all names have been changed. What follows, then, is an array of quotations and comments that reflect the program's focus on inquiry and dialogue in areas such as school and society, knowledge, and craft of teaching as well as student role adjustment from "college student" to "teacher." We conclude with some comments about our graduates.

General Impressions. Given the fact that we will have completed four semesters of the new program in May of this year, we feel student response has been encouraging. We observe some hesitation or down-right displeasure


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from students who are not used to being asked to take a more active role in their classes. Some (noteably Freshmen) see Education courses as disappointing because the classes often do not fit the traditional notion of what a college course "should be", that is, professor lectures; students listen and take notes. Since this is the predominant style at Rockhurst College, Education classes have been interpreted as less serious because of our efforts to engage students in small group discussions and other vehicles that foster active participation. This, we hope, will be resolved over time.

Students have displayed a wide range of reactions to the revised program. Compare the following: Rosa's comment, "I was amazed when I began to consider what I had learned . . . I never realized the complex nature of teaching until I observed a teacher and applied the dilemma language" and Karen's comment following . . . a classroom observation, "Because I knew what to look for, I saw so much!" with Stan's journal note regarding Education courses, "Tedium builds. Hour upon hour, day upon day."

Students observe classrooms in the public, city schools and in private and suburban schools. For some, sterotypes about public schooling and/or class and race are confirmed. For example, a small group observes a parochial 4th grade class in which students in language arts are working on plurals and possessives. The same group later observes a 9th grade public urban school in which an English class studying plurals and possessives is working in the same workbook used in the 4th grade class of a parochial school.

Some students appear to be going through the motions, giving the staff what they want but not really working for understanding. "Why do we spend so much time worrying about cultural backgrounds?" asks one student as she nears the completion of the program. Another cheerfully completes all work, but it seems to have no impact on his classroom teaching or his thinking about teaching. Still another simply wants to be told "how to teach" without being bothered with such problems as developing a rationale, knowing the students or considering possible consequences.



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Other students get involved with enthusiasm and interest. We see students working to apply what they have learned. For example, a student teacher successfully negotiates with her cooperating teacher to teach a map unit to a second grade class in a school where she was told the primary grades "don't have time for social studies." And, consider the group in a social studies methods class who are given a choice between working on a family history project or a community history. The class is small, and, on their own, the students opt to do a collaborative community history. They struggle with finding resources and marvel at the richness they uncover in old books, interviews and walks through city neighborhoods. They create a visual history of Kansas City with a series of posters. They're not sure which was the more important learning outcome--the experience of actually "doing history" or the experience of having created something collaboratively.

Another example of enthusiastic involvement can be seen in a class which is divided into thirds so that all class member have the opportunity to present their research papers. Debate and discussion has been encouraged throughout the semester and now, as the semester ends, students speak out comfortably. The teacher sits in on each group randomly and silently. The quality of the research and the reporting is mixed, but in each group at least some of the reports stimulate debate and discussion. The students become involved in impassioned arguments about educational issues while the teacher sits quietly in the background.

Knowledge. Slowly, taken for granted knowledge comes into question. In the early field experiences course a discussion of constraints at work in schools stimulates a student to ask incredulously, "What constraints could there possibly be for



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teachers?" In a session on hunger and poverty in the U.S., a student says, "And I thought that there was no hunger in America . . . the president said so."

As the following quotations from Karen's and Irene's journals show, some students are making connections between the disciplines and are beginning to question, to see knowledge as problematical:

> After "acting up" again in class I reflected on my actions. First, I know it's just that I have taken advantage of the setting, that is, the informality of what we are doing. Second, I feel its the past three years of sitting in many classes (not all) without expressing myself. This past year and half of last year I began questioning the material I studied. Suddenly I felt as though I had made an enormous break-through in life. Instead of always sitting back and listening, I was now asking questions. I cannot pinpoint what made me change.
> I now wonder if I can assist my students in making such a break through. I know that lecturing will not facilitate questioning as much as other activities. The only problem is experimenting into what activities will achieve the ends. My original thoughts include asking spontaneous questions. If I send them home to write ten questions, then the text-book will probably be used. However, if the questions are made up during class then possibly a student may ask a question that is truly his own.
>
> (Karen's Journal)

> Today we were discussing pluralism and the tension between diveristy and commonality. It was stated that prior to the 1960's, emphasis was placed on the "melting pot" theory, which means to "Americanize" the immigrants. After the 1960's however, emphasis has been placed on diversity. When this whole subject was mentioned, I thought about a theology class I took last semester. In this class we read a lot of material on the history of the Catholic immigration movement to the U.S. According to the articles, the national parishes were the best thing for the immigrants because they were allowed to retain their ethnic identity while at the same time be "Americanized." The articles also described characteristics of each ethnic group and distinguished between each one. I realized that there was no such thing as a typical Catholic immigrant. One point that I wanted to bring out is that

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> the Bishops who advocated the national parishes relized the importance of diversity. It seems as though the realization of the importance of diversity has existed in the U.S. for a long time, at any rate long before the 1960's. Another point that I want to bring out is that the national parishes were formed because each immigrant group had its own way of looking at reality and were not willing to compromise with other Catholic groups. As a teacher I have to realize that many of my students will come from different cultural backgrounds. I shall have the task of trying to understand their unique points of view and helping other students to understand each other. I was just looking over my notes from our last class about the Mismeasure of Man. It's difficult to believe that scientists not too long ago thought that they could measure intelligence by looking at the size of a skull. I wonder what we are doing this day and age that will be absolutely appalling to future generations. Maybe it will be something about how we educate students in school.
>
> (Irene's Journal emphasis in text)

School and Society. In the area of School and Society most students display an expanding awareness, as the following journal excerpts show:

> It [a multi-cultural session] made me realize that there is so much I don't know about America ... . there are so many people and events that occur right under our noses and we never experience them nor are even aware of them. [After reading The Color Purple by Walker] I feel some of the pain they [Irene's own mother and grandmother] have felt. I breath some of the air they have, though it is not quite as dirty
>
> (Isabel's Journal)

> The traditional/modern dilemma in the book [The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie] reminded me, in a way, of my own schooling. Throughout my school years I received traditional Catholic instruction which, as I grew older, I found to be at odds with much of the world out there. For a long time, I found it difficult to let go of the constraints in which I did not really believe and think for myself. Even today I find it difficult at times. Luckily, the Jesuits have given me a much more human, realistic picture of Catholicism. I guess that the problem I have had searching out my true values and beliefs is very pertinent to the valuing discussions we have in class. If anything, one's schooling should not dictate a set of values, but help one discern his/her values, and then help him/her act on them.
>
> (Laureen's Journal)

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In a Language in Schools session each group of students heatedly defends or argues against contrasting views of cultural deprivation theory after reading an article written by either a strong proponent or critic of the topic. Without the teacher's guidance, the discussion expands to utilize the dilemmas of schooling language and examples from the students' personal experiences.

One student who is about to graduate asks "What was the point of all that multi-cultural stuff?" Another speaks for "mainstream" America:

> Somehow, all of this cultural stuff is getting to be a bit much. Is mainstream America so bad? What about the bulk of students who get overlooked and ignored because they are the same. Sometimes teachers forget about the kid who sits quietly and makes no special demands upon the schools and the teacher . The culturally different child needs attention but let's be fair and give out equal time.
>
> (Renee's Journal)

And still another expresses the following concern:

> A lot of the time I'd notice the Black race seems to be just as prejudiced. It makes it unfair that we're supposed to be so understanding but they don't have to be. Now here I go, stereotyping. Some feel they don't have to be.
>
> (Iris's Journal, emphasis in text)

Craft of Teaching. The wide range of responses from students is particularly clear when considering their developing craft--thoughts about their own and other's teaching practice. This becomes evident in the following excerpts:

> "How will I get students to think creatively, to discuss their thoughts with others who don't hold the same ideas? For so many years I had thought that I had to say what [my teachers] had said and follow their routines--blow the whistle as they blew the whistle . . . I remember a "sameness" about my teachers . . . Will I fall into that mold? How can I change from the idea of what a teacher should do? I feel myself wanting to come out of that same mold. Why?"
>
> (Leah's Journal)

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> Today we read two short stories in writing systems that were not English. Boy! did this bring back memories of first grade. I despised reading class. The teacher always called on someone to stand up and read. I remember never concentrating on the meaning of the story when we read. I was too concerned with how good or how bad I would do. The teacher would always ask questions after the story. Half of the time, I would be clueless as to what the story was about. I remember feeling so embarrassed because I wouldn't know the answer. The teacher would always say "look at the book." Of course, by this time I was frozen. When trying to read those two selections today, I was filled with those same type of stressful feelings. Yuck! There are so many ways of conducting reading class besides round robin reading, yet that's what so many teachers do. This brings me back to: Imprints [a film] in that a teacher can get stuck in a certain teaching practice, such as round robin reading, and never venture away from it.
>
> (Irene's Journal)

Progress in the development of the craft of teaching has been varied. We see a wide range of student response. For example, compare the following two observations of student teachers. In one, a high school sophomore English class in a largely black, urban school is listening to an introduction to a short story by Ralph Ellison. Reggie, the student teacher, plods on through his lesson plan rather than follow-up on a meaningfully relevant, but unexpected comment from one of his pupils. On the other hand, Rosa, a student teacher who is being video taped as she teaches senior high school trigonomentry, abandons her carefully thought-out lesson plan to re-teach a concept when what was to be a brief introductory review reveals that over half of the class is confused.

In her Teacher Study (a project required in the early field experiences course) Rosa analyzes the teaching practice of her cooperating teacher:

> knowledge: her math class is all 'book learning' . . . while in her computer class it is a process and problematical . . . she doesn't feel math can be taught any other way when section by section out of the book. Operations control is low for her computer class and especially the advanced [computer classes] while it is high for her math classes the below average [math classes].

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> The dilemmas are so complete. I had learned in the [Introduction to Education course] what the dilemma language was, but it wasn't until I put it into use that I realized the strength of the language . . . When I say this I honestly mean it: out of all the papers I have ever done in college, I have LEARNED the most from this one.
>
> (Rosa's Journal)

Sonia, at first hesitant, also begins to see the usfulness of the dilemma language in developing her craft:

> Language sharpens the memory of observations and experiences, It also distorts the reality or confuses the insignificant with the important or vice versa. I'm finally admitting that Berlaks' dilemma language is helpful. In the Vietnamese language there is no definite pronoun "I". Instead, they find themselves within a relationship in each circumstance which is expressed in their language. "Mother, your youngest son is hungry." In another situation it may be, "Teacher, your grateful student is through with a test." The very language brings about the reality of the constant relationships that are acted out. And, as we talked about this morning [campus class session]. "The unit of existence is the act not the moment."
>
> (Sonia's Journal, emphasis in text)

Quint, however, does not share their opinion:

> "What is the purpose of books such as the Berlak and Berlak and Shaver books? To teach us that as we further our teaching careers we must learn to tolerate boredum and didacticism? Why must learning to teach be so boring?"

Accepting the Role of "teacher". We have been struck by the depth of the personal adjustment taking place in students who are in the Professional Semester. About to graduate and leave the world of "student", which they have known for more than half of their lives, they not only face the reality of the real world, but must step to the other side of the desk, to deal with the notion of becoming an authority figure, to switch roles. The following journal quotes display various levels of adjustment to and reflection's upon accepting the role of "teacher":

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I had to do a little showing them [5th grade class] what is proper behavior today—I read only two paragraphs of Nancy Drew in after lunch ready time when I had planned to read a chapter. I began counting those who weren't listening. When I counted ten, I stopped. I found later I counted one child who was really listening and quiet! Listen to me I sound like a teacher--Yuk! I can remember my 5th grade teacher telling the class that if any of us ever became a teacher, we'd understand why she said and did the things she did. What a day! These kids are obnoxious, arrogant, rude and what's worse, I know just what is going through their heads because I did the same things. I know all the tricks. I suppose they think I was born yesterday. Ike, the scoundrel, breaks his pencil for the third time (on purpose) and dares ask me if he can sharpen it again. "I know the trick, Ike—I used to try and play it myself." He sits with leadless pencil as we finish our English test, glaring at me like a dog on the attack. Why is it I'm tending to like the obnoxious ones. Is it because they're so full of life?

(Sonia's Journal)

I am so sad that this semester is going to be over so soon. I mean really sad! I've never had such a good-time at school. I would like to have another semester of student teaching. Guess I'm getting used to everything. The kids are getting used to me, too. Some just plain don't like me. To be honest the feeling is mutual. I like most of them. Some just sit there and ignore me or just refuse to do anything. Fifth Hour actually applauded when I told them Thursday was my last day. [The cooperating teacher] and I are really turning out to be good friends. I suppose over all I've had a good experience. I certainly have gotten a taste of the real stuff.

(Iris's Journal)

I knicked my finger and am writing with it. My blood is surging with the thoughts of my unit preparations. I would use a leech to relieve the pressure but none are to be found in this house of my father, a modern day M.D. For me tonight, it might as well be the Dark Ages or sometime of <u>oppressison</u>. It's Friday and I'm here at home working on my unit. Ah, the pain of growing up. Homework on the weekend nights used to be a sacrilegious practice in my book. What the hey! I might as well get going--my finger is running dry anyhow.

(Sonia's Journal, emphasis in text)



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The Program's Graduates. At this time ten of the fifteen who have completed the professional semester (which includes student teaching) have accepted full-time teaching contracts. One is a substitute teacher, three are completing additional content area certification requirements and one entered graduate school. Of the ten who were teaching full-time in the Fall, one presented her principal with a copy of Gould's Mismeasure of Man (1981) in an effort to begin a dialogue about the effects of standardized testing on her first graders. Another dropped out of teaching at the Christmas break. And another was appointed to the school board in her district.

We have used a variety of strategies in our attempt to meet these goals. As discussed above, these strategies include using works of literature in all courses, providing students with opportunities for expressive uses of language, incorporating small group work and collaborative projects, planning for activities which call for an analysis of instruction and building upon the liberal core of courses required by the college.

## Conclusion

The revised Rockhurst Teacher Education Program represents a beginning. It is our hope that over time students will come to share our commitment to the practice of teaching as critical inquiry. Our goal is to enable prospective teachers to see that societal issues and daily classroom practice are interconnected and to translate this awareness into reflective action. We are working to develop in our students the ability to teach with an understanding of schooling alternatives from which to make reasoned choices and to consider the possible consequences of their own and others' choices for the students in their classrooms and for society.

We see our students learning to analyze and to question their taken for granted assumptions about the schooling process. Toward this end, a major

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program emphasis rests on language facility as a means to achieve reflective action and to develop the concept of teaching as dialogue.

We have used a variety of strategies in our attempt to meet these goals. As discussed above, these strategies include using works of literature in all courses, providing students with opportunities for expansive uses of language, incorporating small group work and collaborative projects, planning for activities which call for an analysis of instruction and building upon the liberal core of courses required by the college.

Currently, we are in the early stages of an on-going process of program development. Despite the difficulties and fustrations, we can see the program taking shape and feel our own growth as we proceed. Perhaps the greatest challenge (and one of the most difficult) is that we, ourselves, become critical inquirers, that we maintain a focus on the bond between the practice of teaching and the broader issues. We feel it is important, in our own teaching, to attempt to make those connections and to provide positive models for our students. For us, much of the excitement in the preparation of teachers comes from seeing that, through our own teaching as well as that of our students, we maintain direct contact with classrooms and schools in general. We cannot simply teach about critical inquiry in the abstract when, by definition, it includes practice. Thus, we strive to teach students to be critical inquirers in the "lived" sense. And that is no less a challenge for us than it is for our students who are just beginning to teach.



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The following courses are taken by all Education Majors:

1. ED 30 - Intro and Foundations — 3 credits

   Required Readings: Kohl, H. Growing Minds
   Dewey, J. Experience and Education
   Webb, R. Schooling and Society

   Major Requirements:
   1. Observations in schools
   2. Research paper

2. ED 31 - Clinical Experiences — 3 credits

   Required Readings: Berlak, A. and Berlak, H. Dilemmas of Schooling
   Dennison, G. Lives of Children
   Wright, R. Black Boy
   Joyce, J. Portrait of Artist As Young Man

   Major Requirements:
   1. On-going Journal
   2. An in depth child study
   3. An in depth teacher study

   Weekly on-campus seminars
   Two five(5) week praticums at two different sites

3. ED 122 - Educational Psychology — 3 credits

   Required Readings: Glover, J. Educational Psychology
   Donaldson Children's Minds

   Major Requirements:
   1. Demonstration teaching-learning theory
   2. Research paper

4. ED 121 - Psychology of Exception Child — 3 credits

   Required Readings: Kirk, S. and Gallagher, J. Educating Exceptional Children
   Keyes, D. Flowers for Algernon

   Major Requirements:
   1. Documenting half day simulation of handicap experience.
   2. One abstract on each of nine exceptionalities. Journal
   3. Research paper
   4. Critique

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The following courses are taken during Student Teaching Semester:

Professional Block 16/17 credits

Major Readings: Berlak, A. and Berlak, H. Dilemmas of Schooling
Walker, A. Color Purple
Sparks, M. The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie
Robinson, H. Teaching Reading Writing Study Skills: Content Areas
Gould, S. Mismeasure of Man
Shaver, J. Facing Value Decisions: Rationale Building for Teachers

Requirements:
1. Student Teaching: 8 weeks
2. Construct and Implement a Unit of Instruction
3. Synthesis Paper

Additional Required Courses

1. For Elementary Majors

ED 110 - Childrens Literature 3 credits

Required Readings: Egoff, Only Connect
Sutherland, Children and Books

Major Requirements:
1. Research paper
2. Card file
3. Demo lesson in a school

2. For Elementary Majors

ED 103 - Geography 3 credits

Required Readings: Harm de Blij The Earth: A Topical Geography
Achebe, C. Things Fall Apart

Major Requirements: 1. Research paper

3. For Elementary Majors and Secondary English Majors

ED 165 - Language in Schools 2 credits

Required Readings: Moffett, a. The Universe of Discourse
b. Handbook K-12
White, Once and Future King

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Major Requirements:
1. Unit of instruction
2. Demo lessons (in class and local schools)
3. School observations

4. For Elementary Majors and Secondary Social Studies Majors:

ED 167 - Social Studies in Schools — 2 credits

Required Readings:
Barth, J. Principles of Social Studies
Forman, J. My Enemy, My Brother
Weitzman, D. My Backyard History Book

Major Requirements:
1. Unit of instruction
2. Community history project
3. Textbook analysis
4. School observations

5. For Elementary Majors and Secondary Science Majors

ED 130 - Science in Schools — 2 credits

Required Readings:
Watson Double Helix
Hungerford and Tomera
Science in the Elementary School
Collettee, A. and Chiapetta, E.
Science Instruction in the Middle and Secondary Schools

Major Requirements:
1. Unit of instruction
2. Demonstration lesson
3. School observations
4. Textbook appraisal

6. For Elementary Majors and Secondary Math Majors

ED 112 - Math in Schools — 2 credits

Required Readings:
Fuys and Tischler
Teaching Mathematics in Elementary School
Abbott, Flatland
N.C.T.M., Methods of Teaching Secondary Math
Cooney, T., Davis, E. and Henderson, K.
Dynamics of Teaching Secondary School Mathematics

Major Requirements:
1. Unit of Instruction
2. Demonstrations lesson
3. School observations
4. Piagetian experiments with children
5. Mathematical literature

7. For Secondary Majors

ED 152 - Methods of Teaching in Secondary School — 2 credits

Required Readings:
Sizer, T. Horace's Dilemma
Hesse, H. Beneath the Wheel

Major Requirements:
1. Unit of instruction
2. School observations

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